

REMARKS

Applicants file this divisional application as being consistent with the restriction requirement between two groups of claims which was made in the Office Action of July 16, 2002, in the original application No. 09/898,997, now Patent No. 6,523,496. The Office designated claims 1-27 as Group I and claims 28-44 as Group II. After traversal, the prior application was restricted to the Group I process claims. The divisional application No. 10/341,729, filed January 14, 2003, is directed to the Group II composition claims. The presently filed divisional application is restricted to Group I and contains only process claims.

A revised title and abstract of the disclosure are submitted. All of product claims 28 through 44 are cancelled. Independent claims 1, 11 and 18 are amended to insert subject matter of presently cancelled claims 6 and 16 and to add that the stated improvement is when compared with litter of about 100% pine wood shavings. These amendments are in accordance with amendments made to the claims of the original application. In addition, each independent claim is revised to remove certain language to make the claims more in accordance with the scope of the prior divisional application. Certain dependent claims are revised to be consistent with presently amended independent claims 1 and 11.

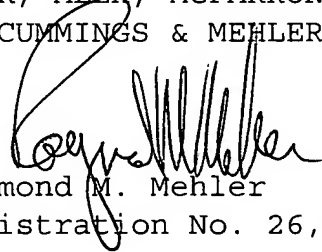
Applicants respectfully believe that this application is in condition for allowance, and favorable consideration is respectfully requested.

The references listed on the attached PTO form are called to the attention of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Applicants enclose a copy of only those references which are listed on sheet 3 of 7 and sheet 7 of 7. All others had been submitted in the original application and/or in the pending divisional application, and copies of these are not enclosed.

This statement is provided in order to comply with 37 CFR §1.56, §1.97 and §1.98, and this statement is not to be construed as a representation that no information exists which is more material than these references, or that the information is considered to be material to patentability.

Respectfully submitted,

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